1990

Casualties of war and the politics of representation in Vietnam

Samantha Walsh
Edith Cowan University

Edith Cowan University

Copyright Warning

CASUALTIES OF WAR AND THE POLITICS OF REPRESENTATION IN VIETNAM

BY

Samantha Walsh B.A.

A Thesis submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of

Honours Degree in Media Studies

at the School of Arts and Applied Sciences, Western Australian College of Advanced Education.

Date of Submission: 30.11.90.

USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

Abstract

This thesis explores the 'casualties' of media representations of the Vietnam War in the nineteen eighties. Produced during the term of office of Ronald Reagan these texts rework central ideological issues revelent to that presidency: American innocence, 'fragile hero', Vietnam and the Vietnamese, and gender relations.

Such issues will be looked at across a range of films and television programmes. Firstly, the filmic 'casualties'; American innocence, fragile hero and 'others' will be identified and analysed. Secondly, their relation to television will be initially expanded with a view to reevaluating television's supposed 'inferiority'.

Television's casualties will then be analysed with particular reference to China Beach's 'progressiveness', formal openness and feminist criticism. Because it is a genre bender traditional gender representations are challenged. Both women's and men's positions as casualty are reevaluated.

Finally, China Beach's exploration of gender without difference, its self-reflexive nature and its intertextuality offer perspectives which can be best described as postmodernistic. China Beach's continuous innovativeness illustrates that 'other' representations, without a hierarchy of discourses, are possible.

Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate, without acknowledgement, any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education and that to the best of my knowledge and belief, it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

14.10.91

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank those people who gave their time and understanding during my 'tour of duty'.

I received great pleasure in having Dr. David McKie as my supervisor. His advice, criticism, wisdom and personal insights were not only influential with regard to my thesis but also my personal growth. I could never thank him enough.

I would also like to thank the rest of the staff of Media Studies for their support. In particular, Robyn Quin's, Keng Chua's and Brian Shoesmith's criticism and encouragement were important to the development of my thesis.

I gratefully acknowledge the support and editing skills of my mother, Marilyn Walsh. My friends, who came to desire the completion of my thesis almost as much as me, also have my thanks. Their patience and friendship were appreciated. A special friend, Chris G'Froerer, deserves a separate mention. The completion of my Honours degree was due to her invaluable personal philosophy and positive thinking.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

"The first casualty of war is truth" is a commonly used truism but the aim of this thesis is not to examine the historical accuracies of Vietnam. What is to be explored, in both film and television, is 'the casualties of war' in terms of representations.

Representation can be defined as " the process of putting into concrete forms an abstract ideology" (O'Sullivan, Hartley, Saunders and Fiske, 1983, p. 199). Films and television programmes of the Vietnam War will be utilized in this study to analyse the battles of representation and therefore some of the competing ideologies. This study limits itself to those film and television products made during the eighties, a period dominated by the presidency of President Ronald Reagan, 1980 - 1988. The eighties also proved to be an era in which the topic of Vietnam was being disseminated via both mediums. Whilst the films will be used initially as a point of entry to this thesis, the main focus will be television. The films include Rambo: First Blood I (1982), Rambo: First Blood II (1985), Platoon (1986), Full Metal Jacket (1987), Casualties of War (1989), Born on the Fourth of July (1989). The thesis' main television programmes are the American productions of Tour of Duty (1989/90) and China Beach (1989/90).

Representations are organised and regulated across different media, and within different discourses. This is the main reason as to the inclusion of both film and television in this thesis. The representations of Vietnam did not occur in a vacuum but are a result of already existing media texts. As Jean Luc Godard pointed out "Vietnam was first and foremost a war in representation" (cited in Hebdige, 1985, p. 47). Representations of geography, Vietnamese, grunts (soldiers) in combat, helicopters, nurses, wounded and dead soldiers, found in news reels, first world war films, and television programmes such as , M*A*S*H, have helped to make up the many representations of Vietnam. This pot-pourri of images over a long period of time has influenced the perception a viewer has of the genre, so that viewer expectations of a war genre are, to a degree, concretized.

Films and television are generally separated at analysis level because they are seen as being different in terms of form. Not only are there many different types of media texts on the subject, there are many thematic similarities between the texts; for example, the absolution of American guilt and the psychologically unstable grunt. Although "Vietnam" falls into the category of the war film genre, Vietnam has become a genre in its own right. The Vietnam War is a recognisable genre with recognisable features which override the different forms of film and television. The inclusion of both mediums in this thesis is to illustrate the similarities and/or differences of the genre at an ideological level.

Television programmes with a Vietnam focus have been limited. As the popularity of Vietnam film products continued, television entered into the game with a few major differences, due mainly to its form. Looked at particularly in terms of content, this thesis argues that Tour of Duty can be viewed as a link between the aforementioned films and the television series China Beach. The representations to be explored in this thesis will be referred to as 'casualties of war'. The word 'casualty' usually conjures up images of the physical destruction caused by war. This undoubtedly occurs and is at times an important aspect of representation but, for the majority of the thesis, casualty will be specifically referring to certain topics which are denied representation, and/or are represented in stereotypical ways. Casualty is not necessarily seen in a negative way. The traditional hero as casualty and America as casualty offer up progressive ideas on discourses such as masculinity and relationships, which challenge the general status quo.

"To write politically about film and television means, basically, to write from an awareness of how individual films and television series dramatize, as they inevitably must, the conflicts that characterise our culture: conflicts centred on class, wealth, gender, race, sexual orientation" (Wood, 1986, pp. 3-4). The three main casualties to be explored are: Vietnam and the Vietnamese, American innocence, and gender relations. The Vietnamese and their country of Vietnam are seen mainly as casualties because they lack any representation or

have minimal roles. What is largely absent from the frame is the Vietnamese people's struggle for independence. What is in the frame is the struggle of American people inside and outside the army. The South Vietnamese and the Viet Cong or North Vietnamese either have no voice, and/or if they speak their own language there are no subtitles and/or they are verbally abused and/or they are restricted to a specific range of narrow roles.

On the whole, the North Vietnamese are represented as evil murderers, the South Vietnamese as innocent victims or are the traitors to either America or the North Army. Rarely does the sympathy lie with those Vietnamese who are physical casualties. The representation of Vietnam as a country is portrayed as a casualty in that it is continually being symbolically raped. This symbolism is often graphically displayed by the actual rape of a village, or a woman.

The Vietnamese women are usually seen as victims and therefore casualties. They are either whores, and therefore victim's of economic need and male need, and/or victims of rape. Rape is usually carried out by a dominating party, whether it is America wanting to dominate Vietnam or men's seeming desire to exert power over a woman. Although the representations of Vietnamese women fall, in the main, into these two categories, individual texts offer new and challenging representations of Vietnamese women.

America is in retrospect a 'casualty' because it lost the war, but it is also a casualty in terms of its loss of innocence. America's loss of innocence is an extension of the hero's rites of passage as his own loss of innocence unfolds. The traditional hero can be said to be a casualty through the lack of alternative representations. This thesis will attempt to argue that the Vietnam genre, although upholding many of the traditional hero characteristics, does give rise to the 'fragile hero'. It is through the fragile hero that some of the ideologies and discourses previously taken for granted are being questioned.

This instability of the hero is carried over into the films of the eighties and also into television. Film and television are different forms but they are still conveyors of images, representations, ideologies, discourses. These are read by the viewers who in turn have certain expectations of the Vietnam genre. The viewers bring with them a history not only of the genre but also of the codes and conventions of a hero, men, women, race. To challenge this sense of history is to offer new meanings. Both film and television have similarities in offering challenging discourses to already established ideologies.

Women are traditionally represented in stereotypical ways and, like men, are casualties because of their lack of alternative representations. In films of Vietnam this is quite obvious. By contrast, however, a noticeable change in gender representations can be perceived in the television series of China Beach and, to a lesser degree, Tour of Duty. Unlike the Hollywood films of Vietnam, television openly challenges the 'naturalness' of the traditional division of sexual power. In terms of the continuum of gender representations, Tour of Duty acts as a bridge between film and China Beach.

One of the abstract ideologies underlying the recent popular texts of Vietnam is a reconstruction of the American Dream. This thesis proposes that the texts are reevaluating what is seen as 'truth' and in so doing are applying band-aids to the three main casualties. While there are more sympathetic representations of Vietnamese being portrayed, mainly on television, there is a differentiation between the 'old America' and a 'new America' so that the old America loses the war historically, but the new America wins it ideologically; and there is a more 'radical' representation of women and men that can be seen as 'progressive'. The term 'progressive' is problematic and will be explored in more detail in the body of the thesis.

Finally, this thesis will argue that Vietnam texts, in particular China Beach, are a part of the postmodern terrain. One of postmodernism's premises is that texts do not have a fixed meaning, but a multitude of meanings which then create space for new meanings to be

generated. In the generation of meanings, this paper will examine whether new subject positions are being put forward.

In the war of representations, it is those symbols or representations which get the most media space that will possibly become a part of the popular memory, the popular consciousness. Within texts there are 'structures of preference', in which particular ideologies and discourses battle. In this battle there will be either reproduction of traditional 'casualties' and/or a deconstruction of the casualties and/or alternative representations of casualties which, in turn, may become new casualties. By bringing the casualties of representations into focus, this thesis will explore the construction and implications of the major 'structures of preference' in these struggles.

Section 1 Film's Casualties

America's Innocence

The eighties was a period dominated by the administration of President Ronald Reagan. Bolton (1989/90) argues that Ronald Reagan

> cared deeply for the symbols of American life.... nourished these symbols, working to return every fallen icon to its proper place in the patriotic firmament. God, the flag, heroism, freedom, money, anti-communism: all took on new life and meaning. (p. 21)

In his 1980 - 1988 term of office, Reagan's aim was to place back those symbols of America which had slipped from their dominant positions. Scandals such as Nicaragua, the Iran-Contra deal affair and Vietnam had rocked the basic American premise that 'Truth' and 'Justice' are 'the American Way'.

'Truth', 'Justice' is epitomised by the cartoon of Superman. The portrayal was that "Faster than a speeding bullet" he was able to clean up the crime in America. He was the ideal American and became a symbol which carried many of the discourses of the American ideology. Other cartoon characters, such as Mickey Mouse, similarly suggest an undying allegiance to the 'American Way' coated in an innocence of humour. Cartoons are thought to be harmless and innocent in their fight against one another for survival - which is one of the reasons why they are the main diet of young children. Full Metal Jacket borrows from the cartoon genre in its continual reference to cartoons: the character's nicknames are taken from the cartoon world - Joker, Gomer Pyle; at the end of the movie they significantly sing the Mickey Mouse song; and backgrounded in some scenes are stuffed toys of Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse. Full Metal Jacket is aware of the innocence that cartoons carry with them because the film then creates its own cartoon characters but with a darker side to them: Joker with his caustic sense of humour contiually questions the presence of America in

Vietnam, Gomer Pyle commits suicide because he cannot be a hero because he is fat and has no physical ability. The innocence is shattered.

Another similarity between *Full Metal Jacket* and the cartoon genre is a belief that heroes, whether cartoon characters or 'real life' characters, are indestructible. Although many of the many of these soldiers named after cartoon characters die, the main hero Joker lives on as he walks along the 'Perfume River' singing the Mickey Mouse Club song. The singing of the Mickey Mouse song at the end of the film signifies an acknowledgment that the old ideological America will continue to exist. The patrol group singing Mickey Mouse denies a total shattering because in the final chapter it still links itself to America the cartoonish world of Justice, survival, truth and partiotism. So although there is a sense of loss of the American innocence, it, like the cartoon characters, continues to live.

The films of Vietnam foreground the change between what was seen as old America and what is the new America. There was a time "In popular memory ... when Americans viewed themselves and their society as basking in a glow of superiority, beauty and grace." (Bellhouse, 1982, p. 157) They were seen to be the innocent, superior society. America's new image is that of innocence battered and in the process of being resurrected. Vietnam has encouraged a new look at America's sense of self, to see aspects of itself before usually ignored or less obvious before.

The texts of Vietnam shatter the innocence in two ways: fratricide and rape. In Platoon the innocence is shattered with the deliberate murder of one of the American soldiers by a fellow American soldier; in Born on the Fourth of July it is the accidental killing of a fellow soldier and the hero as casualty; in Rambo II it lies with the United States army's denial of its own war heroes; in Full Metal Jacket, the smooth surface of innocence is shattered when Gomer Pyle murders his superior officer, then commits suicide because he cannot cope with the rigour and the 'world of shit' of the army. The common thread of the murder of brother soldiers is a symbolic way of identifying the guilt of America.

The other marker of guilt is rape. This occurs in Platoon when the platoon raids a Vietnamese village and a group of soldiers rape a young girl; in Casualties of War it is the rape and murder of the innocent Vietnamese village girl. The connection of America's rape of Vietnam is made explicit by Joker, the hero of Full Metal Jacket, who openly ruptures the smooth surface by his sarcastic, caustic comment that the reason why he is in Vietnam is to rape and pillage the Jewel of South East Asia.

In these ways the films of Vietnam, to an extent, open up debate about America's innocence. It is in 'true' democratic style that America is able to be placed on trial by America. It does not parallel Nazi Germany where the rest of the world stood in judgement on the criminals and condemned, where there were seemingly simple lines dividing the good and the bad. In the Vietnam films, although there is a distinct line between the evil Vietnamese and the good America, there are areas of grey in which America is also seen as evil.

In the films, Vietnam atrocities were committed by American soldiers, military gave orders to napalm areas containing their own soldiers, as in Platoon, rapes and murders were carried out by American soldiers, such as those in Casualties of War and Born on the Fourth of July. In the films, judgement of America is not passed by 'others' (Europe, Vietnam) but via the discourses of its own representations. America, by passing judgement on itself, symbolized in Casualties of War's actual court room trial, circumvents any major ideological contradictions. Although there is a shattering of innocence at one level, a total shattering is denied because the status quo is symbolically restored. The vehicle for the symbolic restoration is the hero. The hero's path leads him to question the validity of America, not only of the validity of America in Vietnam but of America to itself. The status quo is restored because the heroes are undeniably American and they return to America. For example, Joker returns to America by singing Mickey Mouse song; Kovic is lost admidst cheers and American flags; and Ericksson, it is implied in the end of Casualties of War,

returns to his wife and children. However due to the traumatic spychological journey of the hero the status quo is seemingly different - a more mature and better Americe is envisioned.

In Platoon, for example, symbolic restoration is expressed through religious symbolism as the hero experiences two opposing forces, one Christ like in manner and one devil-like. The devil-like creature of Sergeant Barnes can be seen to be representative of the old America, whilst Sergeant Elias is the softer, more fragile America. Although Elias is murdered by the hand of evil, he is replaced by another fragile hero - Chris Taylor. This hero reconciles his position, and by extension America's position, in the end as his voice-over pronounces that they did not fight the enemy, they fought the enemy within themselves and survived. This allows for

errors but denies total direct rupture of the discourses of patriotic America. The hero's reconcilition suggests that the status quo, a new but similar status quo has been restored. The new, more mature America is still being built on the old America.

Other films echo this new found maturity. In Casualties of War, not only are the American soldiers duly punished but a more solemn and mature Fox is seen at the end having his guilt, and, by extension, America's guilt, absolved by an Asian woman. In Rambo II, Rambo is seen as capable of loving his country, even after it has abandoned him. Rambo verbally declares "All I want, and every guy who ever fought in Vietnam wants, is for our country to love us as much as we love it." What has really abandoned him are the people from the military and it is they which represent America. His anguished cry acknowledges the failings of America, but still there is a possibility for hope. The belief in the American Dream is being resurrected in that America is still a country worth loving and is therefore still alive.

In Born on the Fourth of July, made five years later, Ron Kovic is also abandoned by America but this time more explicitly. Receiving a physical wound in Vietnam he returns to America only to spend periods of time in hospitals not fit for human occupancy. As in

Rambo I, society is depicted as having rejected the returned veteran. When the period of penance is over, Ron Kovic's achievement comes with his symbolic denial of the old American pro-war stance as he takes up an anti-war line. The end creates a sense of belonging as Kovic is swept up in images of America - the red, white and blue flags, the cheers of people - which was absent at the end of Rambo, and it is this which illustrates an acceptance of the new America. The pride is back in Born on the Fourth of July; proud of being a veteran but, more importantly, pride at being accepted once more as an American. As with the other films, Born on the Fourth of July delivers up to the American people a hero surrounded by patriotic firmament - flags, but mostly freedom from guilt and a new America worth belonging to.

Although the films of Vietnam do have gaps and spaces which challenge the status quo, they none the less usually follow the pattern of realistic characters that John Fiske (1987) describes:

> It is in the interests of the status quo to read character as the representation of a real person rather than as a bundle of social discourses and crime as individually, rather than socially, motivated because this allows the social system to escape interrogation, and allows for an individual solution to a social problem. (p. 168)

The individual rises above the system to win not the war but, in his/her achievement in rising above the evils of the world, the crime is usually pinned on a few individuals not on the nation or institutions. Yet in Vietnam, even in this area, the killers are represented as "'casualties' of military conditioning, their responsibility is diminished and war's ideological matrix becomes a caricature of misogynistic, racist peacetime society" (Smith, 1989, p. 50). The texts (both film and television) of Vietnam, although of a period relegated to the history books, can be seen as a metaphor for peacetime society. For example, the traditional representations of men are changing which can be viewed in China Beach's representation of men dealing with rejection, love and death can be seen as a metaphor for society's changing image of men; there is a reflection of 'make peace not war' in the text's rejection of the

unecessary violence and waste of Vietnam which again is a reflection of the world's movement away from extended wars; and, especially in television texts, relationships between men and women are portrayed as being more complicated which is indicative of 'real' relationships.

Few movies - Top Gun is an exception - portray the military in a positive light. This is odd since Reagan presided over the largest peacetime military build-up in American history. There was also the problem of the military, which was faced with the need to sell the public on an increasing military budget, and it was aware of the negative public reactions to various scandals and therefore was looking for new ways of improving their images. Top Gun was created with the assistance of the US Navy, and predictably glorified naval life. What becomes apparent is a contrast between the uncomplicated non-Vietnam war films such as Top Gun, and the complicated Vietnam films. What complicates the narratives of Vietnam is the questioning of the ideological puritanism of the military that Top Gun exudes.

The Vietnam films maintain, at the least, a healthy cynicism towards the military, as the anti-defence establishment rhetoric is strong. A complex set of discourses is struggling for position. The discursive practices at the same time oppose and promote the ideologies at work. On the one hand, the military is seen to be criminal in the way it uses innocent people to do 'its dirty work', it is seen to be a liar and a distorter of truth, and on the other hand it is seen to be helpless because it is having to live in 'the shit' that it created and is defenceless against the bureaucracy and ideologies that created it.

In many of the texts the hero soldier confronts the military establishment, usually represented by those in positions of power (Casualties of War, Platoon). The hero grunt throughout the genre takes on the, military, and therefore the United States of America. First Blood I depicted a returned veteran, John Rambo, as not coping with 'the world' ('the world' is a term that is used continually throughout the genre to mean America). Rambo, in his confused mental state, takes on the American military on American soil. He takes on the

characteristics of the Viet Cong, mainly in his use of the skills he learnt in Vietnam. His home grown skills are pitted against the sophisticated weaponry of the United States. Even in Rambo: First Blood II, in which the Americans win the Vietnam war, the enemies are three-fold: the Russians, the Viet Cong, and the American military.

Born on the Fourth of July in fact backgrounds the military. Ron Kovic is represented as a good soldier willing to die for his country. The only 'dig' at the military occurs when Kovic shoots one of his fellow American soldiers by mistake. The officer in charge pushes the incident aside as if it not not occurred. Ron Kovic cathartically tries to absolve himself of his crime by confessing to the dead soldier's family. Although the confession aids in his recovery it is not until he virtually denounces his past that he is able to forgive, be forgiven and forget. "Ten years later, Vietnam films ... are doing what was once religion's work: absolution and amnesia" (Smith, 1989, p. 51).

In Casualties of War, religion, one of Reagan's icons to be resurrected, is seen to transcend war atrocities. Ericksson, the innocent newcomer to the war, is seen to be stronger in resisting both the army and his mentor because of his religious beliefs. What does this say about America? Morality is a strong theme throughout the Vietnam genre. In Full Metal Jacket, Joker, who is a correspondent therefore a non-combatant, shoots the Vietnamese sniper. His morality is seen to be intact because he saves her from pain and shame. In Casualties of War it is because of a strong sense of morality that Ericksson resists peer group pressure to gang rape a Vietnamese woman and then to finally bring the offenders to be court martialled.

Kovic's sense of morality in Born on the Fourth of July has him confessing his crime to the family of the American soldier he accidently killed and also publicly protesting about the Vietnam war. Morality is not only about attitudes towards killing or saving, it is also about, the view of the morality of Americans being in Vietnam. The confrontations that many of

the grunts have with their superiors is an extension of America questioning America about its morality.

America cannot deny that it lost the war but morally it can still win 'hearts and minds' through the right kind of moral character. For example in Platoon the war is mainly between the men in the platoon; Barnes is an extension of the military whilst Elias is representative of morality, the conscience of society. Taylor can be seen to be the middle man, either to become a Barnes or a Elias. In the end it is the battle between Barnes and Taylor that sees the winner as morality, conscience.

Taylor leaves the napalmed area in a helicopter with his voice over ending with "God bless America". America has purged itself of characters such as Barnes in Platoon, and Sergeant Merserve in Casualties of War, and with characters like Taylor to carry on is once again worthy of God's blessing.

Gaps and spaces are created in the texts of Vietnam by their cynicism or awareness, each at their different levels, of the myths (heroism, the flag, God, freedom) which are trying to be set up or rehabilitated. The rehabilitation of American symbolism was not innocent; it was instead tied to very specific policy objectives because in

> 1958, Vietnam and then Watergate brought a collapse in popular regard for American institutions generally and for American business in particular. Following the end of the Vietnam war in 1975 a new re-Americanisation program, now called 'economic education', was started by one of the world's largest advertising agencies....There had been, between 1976 and 1980, a 'watershed' reversal of public opinion.... Once again democracy was safe for American business. (Wheelwright and Buckley, 1987, pp. 160-161)

Thus the "means of persuasion are always changing to fit new circumstances. Those with power must respond to shifting economic and political situations, and to new challenges and ruptures in the web of authority" (Bolten, 1989/90, p. 35). The elements of this quote are

obvious in the films of Vietnam. They portray a collapse in popular regard for American institutions, mainly the military, but there is also a sense in which the symbols of democracy are once more being returned to their rightful place in the name of patriotism.

Throughout the Vietnam genre there appears to be a sense of disunity - protesters back home question the actions of those serving in Vietnam, disunity in America between America itself and its war criminals. The sense of unity that sews the seams together is the 'truth' of being in Vietnam. This is signalled in Casualties of War when Ericksson, sitting on a bus, recounts his experiences in Vietnam via a flashback. In the concluding scene, when he returns to the present day, the Asian woman who initially 'triggered off' his memory says "You had a bad dream. Its over, I think." The bad dream that America had is over. A new America, a new image for America is vital, a new style is necessary, but still these new images exist in history and Vietnam is one realm where the contest is being played out. The battle of the 'other', older America, against the new Reagan's America of today. The old America who made many mistakes is able to renovate them into glistening, new images. It is in the Vietnam war genre, a place where all of the symbols of Reagan's America are used freely for propaganda purposes, that "We can apologise for wrongdoing and move on" (Smith, 1989, p. 51).

The Fragile Hero

The Green Berets, made only three years into the Vietnam War, took up the movie/Hollywood conventions of what constituted a war hero. According to Andrew Britton (n.d.)

> action genres were traditionally dependent on a given system of explanation and the function of a hero endowed by it with the dramatic potency and the moral status necessary to control and regulate the forces defined, in contradistinction to him, as undesirable and subversive. (p. 5)

The ethos is signalled by the star chosen for the film. John Wayne's ethos is carried through into The Green Beret's representation of the Vietnam war. A star known for his pro-America line and widening the frontier ideology, Wayne was the ultimate hero.

The subsequent films of the seventies altered the John Wayne hero image. The enemy was usually the 'other' - Indians, other cowboys. The division between good and evil was clear. The shift came with films such as The Deer Hunter and Apocalypse Now. They were instrumental films in the representation of a new type of hero. The enemy as 'other' had shifted to the heroes themselves. He was rarely seen in combat, was mostly seen trying to cope with his experiences of war. There appears to be an emphasis on the psychological state of the returned veterans, the lack of sureness, the instability.

On the surface the eighties films espouse the John Wayne ethos, but underneath there still remains the influence of the seventies films - the Vietnamese enemy is the obvious 'other' but is backgrounded. What is foregrounded is an internal psychological battle or a battle of good and evil within a platoon. The hero, in the eighties films, is one of Reagan's fallen icons in the process of being returned to its rightful place. He is Rambo, the hero who once again wins the war for America in Rambo: First Blood II, or Chris Taylor in Platoon, or Ron Kovic in Born on the Fourth of July, or Sven Ericksson in Casualties of War or Joker in Full Metal Jacket. Some films do not have a hero, such as Hamburger Hill. The heroism in this film

belongs to the men as a group, who tried to take 'the hill' from the enemy, against horrendous conditions, rather than the individual.

Heroism is back with the recognition of the veteran as hero, or as in Born on the Fourth of July, the hero as veteran. The films, however, tend to slip between recognising that the traditional hero has lost some popularity and the fact that there is still a need to create a hero. In the films of World War II, the hero's functions were well defined. He (war is a 'man's' domain) was portrayed as a leader, a thinker, and above all, moral.

In Casualties of War, the hero is not a leader, but is strong religiously. God or religion is another of Reagan's icons to be restored to its 'rightful place'. Casualties of War's squad's sergeant is a rotten apple as he leads the majority of the squad to rape and murder a Vietnamese girl. In Platoon, the hero is not a leader because the position is once again held by the sergeant who is evil. But he is depicted as moral in his choice of goodness over evil. In Born on the Fourth of July, the hero is not a thinker or a leader but his moral disposition leads him to confess his crime and become a peace activist. In Full Metal Jacket, Joker makes the division clearest within an individual. On his jacket he wears a 'peace button' and on his helmet he has written 'born to kill'. He explains this irony as "trying to say something about the duality of man, the Jungian thing".

In the other films, a more traditional religious duality is central. Many of the Vietnam narratives centre around the 'duality of man'. In Platoon, there is Elias who is the Christ-like figure as opposed to Barnes who represents the devil, and Chris Taylor, the innocent who takes the place of Elias when he dies and becomes the new Christ figure. In Casualties of War there is Meserve the evil one as opposed to the good in Ericksson (Michael Fox), and in Rambo - First Blood I and Rambo II it is Rambo against the evil United States military. The hero of the Vietnam genre illustrates a divided morality - on the same side.

The Vietnam heroes are in marked contrast to the heroes of the past who were positive in their knowledge of who constituted an enemy and who did not. Above all, they did not see the enemy as themselves, it was a definite 'other' (the Germans or the Japanese), nor was there much narrative space given to introspection. In their 'American Dream' America was seen as trustworthy. It did not betray its soldiers by not supporting them, it stood behind 'its men' fighting to save America from the perils of the 'other'. The heroes of Vietnam, both in the films and/or life, lacked such loyal backing, moral clarity and rationale. Unlike the hero of the World War II movies the Vietnam hero is posited in a situation which is rarely explained and survival rather than victory or glory is his main aim. The hero also knows that back home he is frowned upon, and protested against. Those beliefs and values that once placed a soldier in a postion of esteem have crumbled. As Britton (n.d.) asks

> What are the consequences, then, for a narrative which preserves a hero function, but posits in relation to him a situation ('Vietnam') which is not only radically inexplicable, but which has also destabilized the structures of values which support and justify the hero's agency? (p. 5)

The hero in the Vietnam genre is not seen to be able to control or regulate the forces around him, so to justify a hero's position takes new workings or contradictions to give the soldier intrinsic value.

With all the odds seemingly stacked up against him, the hero of Vietnam is, nevertheless, an individual who is able to rise above all odds and survive. At the conclusion of most of the films, the hero once again becomes a casualty in traditional terms. Born on the Fourth of July is an exemplary example of this. Ron Kovic, an advocate of the war, is paralysed from the waist down because of a bullet wound received in Vietnam. In the course of his recovery back in America he joins in the protests against the war and becomes an anti-war hero.

This new American hero is reconstructed in the film's final *mise en scene* . The irony of using a war veteran in a wheelchair, with all the traditional American iconography, to deliver

a speech denouncing the war, is highlighted. Blue, white and red fill the screen, the American flag is placed everywhere. Heroism is back, with the recognition of the veteran as the hero of Vietnam.

Kovic's rise to fame is glorified in the movie, and his change of heart from a belief in his presence in Vietnam to a commitment to fighting for peace is seen as heroic.

The ending or the solving of the hero's problems still avoids the socialization process or alienation of vets. The hero as Britton (n.d.) points out:

> represents the change of heart which will discourage future Vietnams; he is the mirror image of the ideal spectator who wishes to believe that social transformations are effected by the acquisition of 'correct' attitudes. (p. 9)

Although the finalé of the film celebrates a change of mind, the film as a whole leaves questions unanswered and does not necessarily, as Britton points out, mean an acquisition of correct attitudes. The resolution of the film does not mean that within the text there is a fragile hero being represented. Although Reagan's America may be trying to bring about social transformations via the resurrection of the American icons, it does not mean that it will occur.

Even those not physically wounded by the war, such as Ron Kovic, are psychologically damaged. Yet, like Kovic, these killers or 'crazies' are represented as 'casualties' of military conditioning and a misplaced American Dream, their responsibility is diminished, they are let off the hook. (Smith, 1989, p. 50) This is highlighted in Casualties of War in which an American war atrocity is committed. Meserve (a play on words 'Me Serve' which says a great deal about the character), played by Sean Penn, the squad's sergeant, is set up as the instigator of the crime. Abducting a girl, under the directions of Meserve, the group of men set out on a short range reconnaissance mission where they rape her and finally murder her. Although Meserve is the 'baddie' he is initially set up as the icon of the good soldier - tough,

ready to die for mates as he nearly does when he saves Ericksson (Michael J. Fox) and as a survivor - therefore valuable to the army. Meserve is a product of the military and it is this that is carried all the way through the film. Although Meserve is court martialled for his crimes, the attitude towards both him and others like him in similar roles is encapsulated in the movie title - Casualties of War.

On another level the hero can be a casualty of war. What happens when the performer does not fit the convention of a 'hero'? Penn's interpretation exudes the physical and sexual confidence that his character, Meserve, 'with dubious actions and motives' demands, but Fox, unfortunately, is never believable as a grunt. His intertextual persona and physical appearance have an effect on his screen character. There exists a formula on the hero in the war genre and when that is intentionally brought to attention it illustrates the hero as casualty. A hero has to possess certain qualities to be believable, but in being believable denies other representations of heroes.

In a similar way Joker, from Full Metal Jacket, does not possess the physical or mental qualities of a soldier. Although he is supposed to be a non-combatant, he is forced to fight. Caught in a position where he is forced to fire his gun, the gun jams. He is seen as incompetent, questioning, and contemptuous of the ways of the military. Joker's hero status is gained more through his humour, which is directed at the establishment, than via representation as a gun-wielding, fighting, mean machine.

Yet if the films tend to favour the strong over the weak they also clearly favour the grunt over the officer. In anti-establishment thinking status is condemned. Vietnam is consistently anti-establishment in that it is a civilian and officer imposed war seen mainly from the suffering grunt's perspective. There is segregation between grunts and officers, not only in the narratives but in the visuals and in the camera's point of view.

In Platoon, Full Metal Jacket, Tour of Duty, and Casualties of War, the perspective is usually from the point of view of the 'grunt'. In many of the films, and in particular Platoon, the camera shot is often at eye level with the grunts rather than omniscient. This convention gives less power not only to the officers but also to the audiences. The spectator is situated to share the same limited parameters as the 'grunt'. In Full Metal Jacket this sense of being one with the ordinary soldier is highlighted with the use of the convention of cinema verité as the soldiers run from artillery fire. The geography of Vietnam aids in emphasising the fragility of the hero grunt. Shots of 'grunts' carrying M16s crawling through a dense jungle, warily looking about them, each afraid of death, are familiar to the Vietnam genre. Body bags are also a familiar part of the *mise en scene* and are reminders of death - which again increases the notion of fragility.

Full Metal Jacket takes the fragility of the hero and his mythic indestructibility a step further. Its use of cartoon characters is once again worth commenting on. The heroes of the screens, whether Vietnam or not, are as indestructible as the cartoon characters. Full Metal Jacket's Joker survives an ambush (as does Ericksson, Kovic, Taylor), warfare, and in the final *mise en scene* is seen marching towards the Perfume River singing the Mickey Mouse song with the rest of the platoon. Cartoons, as discussed in section one, are symbolic of America. Next to the icon of Uncle Sam, cartoons are heavily laden with American ideologies. The indestructibility of a cartoon world is similar to America's belief of itself, and that the individual is able to fight against all odds and survive. As the soldiers of Full Metal Jacket march into an orange tinged sky singing the cartoon song, there is a belief once again that they are indestructible, that they can go on forever. The irony lies in the choice of cartoon used to represent the heroes. Mickey Mouse is not Superman, similarly the heroes are not superheroes anymore but, none the less, heroes. Superheroes have physical and/or mental capabilities beyond that of a human, whereas a hero, as opposed to a superhero, has emotional displays and makes mistakes but is none the less capable of surviving what ever obstacles block his/her way.

The only superhero represented in the films chosen for this thesis is Rambo in Rambo II. Able to survive the most amazingly difficult situations and to go back for more, he is the ultimate superman. However, this type of hero is seen as a threat to the 'Empire of America' because it, in the conclusion, abandons him. In its rejection of the heroic archetype, Rambo, it rejects that type of hero. The heroes accepted back by America are those heroes tending less towards the 'super' category such as Kovic who is disabled, and Taylor.

Films are limited in their portrayal of an alternative type of hero. Their representations are still highly conventional. None the less, there are some apparent changes. Television, which will be explored later, offers different representations of the male hero, mainly because he is seen to be able to interact with females on a regular basis. In the films of Vietnam, the heroes rarely have relationships with women because they are represented as 'others'.

As we have seen, in Vietnam films the traditional hero is made fragile (Rambo I, Casualties of War); he is personally split between good and bad (Full Metal Jacket, Platoon); he is reconstructed (Born on the Fourth of July); he is reduced in the ranks (Platoon) and he is likened to a cartoon (Full Metal Jacket, Rambo II). Yet, finally, his representations remain more conventional than television because his essential apartness from women, the traditional absent 'others' of the war genre, is maintained.

> The representative American films, and film cycles, of the 'seventies are primarily of interest for the various ways in which they seek to negotiate a historical moment which includes not only Vietnam and Watergate, but also the critique of the family, and the questioning of traditional gender roles developed by the women's and gay movements. (Britton, n.d., p. 4)

Similarly, the texts of the eighties are of interest for the ways in which they represent changing gender roles. In this chapter the title 'others' is apt when analysing the texts of Vietnam because women and the Vietnamese are generally absent or marginalized. This is quite nicely captured in the dedication of the film Platoon: "To the men who fought and died in Vietnam". Women do not rate a mention in most of the films of this genre. When they do they are whores, victims, thieves, or terrorists. They can be seen as casualties because their positions within the texts are limited and stereotypical.

Why were women not portrayed? This problematic question Kathryn Marshall (1987) answers with caution. Women were largely seen as being invisible. If a soldier was not wounded he would rarely see one. Women in Vietnam were seen as caretakers and helpmates. They were trained to help 'the man' and by doing so played down their emotions and needs because the men and the wounded came first. Perhaps it was inconceivable that women had gone to such a dirty, confused war, a war that America had lost, a war that bore no resemblance to World War 11 movies.

Feminist film theory usefully foregrounds such issues by

> looking at existing films, ... and drawing attention to certain matters which often go unnoticed in these films. These matters are centred not only around presences - the explicit ways in which women are represented, the kinds of images, roles constructed by films - but also around absences - the ways in which women do not appear at all or are in certain ways not represented in films. (Kuhn, 1982, p. 73)

A convention of the war genre is the fact that women are rarely seen and therefore have virtually no voice. If they are, they are usually Vietnamese, and/or innocents, and/or prostitutes and/or thieves and/or terrorists. Except in Rambo II, the representative women have no relationships with the men. The woman in Rambo II helps Rambo to survive the jungle with the skills that she has acquired.

In Casualties of War, the rape of the Vietnamese village girl is the catalyst for the narrative but, significantly, she rarely speaks and is physically silenced by a bandage on the mouth. She silently receives attention from both ends of the spectrum of male attention. On the one hand she is violently abused many times and on the other is shown tender loving care as Ericksson tries to save her. In this text we get two representations of patriarchy - one is aggressive and abuses the protective power of a man whilst the other is the more 'sensitive man' who is able to stand against peer group pressure but is the woman's protector. Either way, the woman is the dependent of male sexual power and, therefore, patriarchy.

The typical patriarchal strategy of justifying the rape does not occur in Casualties of War. Blaming the rape victim is one way of absolving the criminals from their act. Because the innocent, young, Vietnamese village girl is abducted from her village by a group of American soldiers there is no justification. But, on the other hand, patriarchy is not questioned outright because of the attempt by Ericksson to rescue her. Ericksson does not question the system, he questions the acts of rape and murder based on religious morals. In a later chapter, the system of patriarchy is questioned as the investigator to a different murder is a woman.

What also occurs in the texts is the intersecting of casualties. Not only are the women victims of rape but their rape also symbolises the raping of Vietnam. Casualties of War and Platoon both include actual rapes in the narrative. In both cases, the rapes are of innocent Vietnamese village girls - which is symbolic of an innocent land that is mainly agricultural. The soldiers have no right to rape a woman and, by extension, America has no right to virtually rape Vietnam.

The intersecting of casualties continues in Full Metal Jacket, although more by suggestion than by actual rape scenes. In Full Metal Jacket there are three female roles; two of which are hookers and the other a sniper. The voice of the hookers is kept to conventional staccato dirty sexual dialogue. In Full Metal Jacket, the first glimpse we have of Vietnam is of the backside of a skimpily clad Vietnamese female moving provocatively towards the hero and his friend. As she walks towards the two men the accompanying soundtrack lyrics play an important part in suggesting meanings at different levels. What we get is a prostitute walking to the beat of 'These boots are gonna walk all over you'. What is difficult to ascertain is whether the music is refering to America walking all over Vietnam or whether it is Vietnam walking over America.

The female is usually represented as either a rape victim or a whore so, in most cases they represent what is thought of America's involvement in Vietnam. The country that was literally used (with hard cash) or raped now has stiletto heels that are gonna walk all over America. The interweaving of music, image of a type of woman, and actions, deny a definite analysis of her as impotent in her role. Via the lyrics it is possible for her representation to acquire another level of meaning, especially when the grunts' dialogue is explicitly making comments to the effect that all Vietnamese women are spies/whores for the Viet Cong.

Some of the eighties texts can be seen to be aware of the marginalisation of women. Full Metal Jacket's use of women is firstly an example of an awareness of women's traditional roles, and it then sets about exploring and exploding them. Ambushed by a lone sniper, two soldiers are strategically hit but not killed. They are left writhing on the ground in pain while the rest of the platoon watch helplessly. The sniper eventually turns out to be a woman. The shock of that revelation is brought about by the fact that the method of killing is masculine because it was so controlled and horrific. It could be argued that this scene highlights the rigidity of women's roles in that it relies on the recognition of non-violent women to shock.

Craig Owens (1983) points out that "in order to speak, to represent herself, a women assumes a masculine position" (p. 59).

In Full Metal Jacket the women still play traditional roles such as whore but other alternative roles are available. What has taken place is a reassessment of 'traditional' roles, or perceived 'truisms', in a gendered society, but which may or may not challenge the viewer's assumptions about femininity and masculinity. This breaking down of traditions is caused by ruptures within the texts themselves. The ruptures in texts are created, for example, when there is a disjuncture between a women's assertive behaviour and her passive structural role. War is traditionally a male dominated terrain. A woman's structural role in war is usually that of a nurse or a prostitute. In Rambo II and in Full Metal Jacket the Vietnamese women excel in what is usually male dominated - war. Yet because they are women their actions appear masculine rather than being skilled women in warfare. Neither text sustains an assertive woman throughout the narrative, for both women die.

In the films of Vietnam, the women are at least awarded some screen time whilst the male Vietnamese remain as a casualty. They are generally only briefly seen in terms of firepower and their jungle presence. The male oriental 'other' is seen in stereotyped ways: murderers - Viet Cong - and/or victims and/or innocents - farmers. In Vietnam movies it is not only the women that are rarely seen. The Vietnamese 'enemy' in all movies is silent - silent in terms of stealth through the jungle, and silent in terms of voice. The South Vietnamese, although they are supposed to be 'friendlies', are also noticeably absent unless being abused or abusing, tortured or torturing and killed or killing.

In Rambo II the Vietnamese men are seen as torturers, whilst a woman is allowed to break free and to be seen as a skilled saviour and compassionate. The women of Vietnam are seen to be able to cross over the line between Western and Asian culture. This is possibly because they offer sexual services which is a service that is seen to able to cross cultural boundaries whilst the men are seen as stealthy aliens in black pyjamas as in Platoon. Vietnamese

women, it appears, can cross cultures more easily than their fellow men as they are represented as Western men's properties and are represented as a saleable commodity by both Vietnamese (the pimp in Full Metal Jacket is a Vietnamese) and Western men. Alternatively, if they are not saleable, the female is taken against her will, as in Casualties of War, because of her sexual use.

The western 'round eye' female is rarely represented in the films of Vietnam. When she is represented it is not so much her lack of presence but how she is spoken about by the men. In Platoon, for example, one of the grunts says that he ought to get shot because he's heard about how they are treated in the hospitals with "white sheets, pretty white nurses. I've heard all about them white bitches." The women, both Vietnamese and Western, are often spoken about in a derogatory manner. It is then that they lose their racial differences, as they are grouped together on the level of sexual objects. Soldiers using swear words, usually related to some part of the female anatomy, have become a common element in the Vietnam genre. Jingles are a popular form used by the soldier; for example, Meserve in Casualties of War, acknowledges the power of his crotch and his weapon - "This is my weapon/" [tugs his crotch] "This is my gun/ This is for fighting/ And this is for fun" [again hand is placed on crotch]. Described as a weapon, the penis in the exercise of its power renders women casualties.

Patriarchy abuses the 'other' casualties - women in general, Vietnamese men and women - both physically and verbally. Viewed in terms of rape a Vietnamese women symbolizes both the rape and pillage of Vietnam and the power which patriarchy abuses. Women are generally seen to be dependent on male power to protect them. Also dependent upon either the Viet Cong or the American soldiers to protect them are innocent Vietnamese victims - villagers. Rarely are women given any power to overthrow patriarchy, and if they are given any they do not survive the narrative. Both Western women, and to a lesser extent Vietnamese women, are given more of an opportunity to openly challenge their positions as the marginalized 'other' both in the television series Tour of Duty, but mainly in China Beach.

Section 2 Television's Casualities

From Film to China Beach

To view China Beach as the most 'progressive' Vietnam text involves taking sides in these critical controversies: the presumed superiority of film in relation to television; the perception of realism in relation to media representations of Vietnam; and feminist disagreements over the relations between pleasures and textual politics.

First the perception of television's inferiority, exemplified by John Ellis' Visible Fictions (1982), will be briefly challenged. Then the question of realism in media Vietnam will be considered through writings by two influential Vietnam veterans. Thirdly, the usefulness of conflicting feminist approaches will be evaluated through Hanson's article, Women of China Beach (1990), in the chapter titled China Beach's Women. Finally, in the same and following chapters, the positive aspects of the series will be opened out by analysing its gender representations through individual character roles.

Ellis (1982) writes that

> The narrative image ... is the promise, and the film is the performance and realisation of that promise.... It enables cinema to offer single texts, films which have a high degree of difference each one from the next. Unlike broadcast TV, which thrives on the repetition of formats and of narrative situations, repetition of 'formulae' in cinema is a more perilous business. (p. 30)

Contrary to what Ellis believes, cinema relies on formulas and repetitions, just as television does, and is not necessarily a superior medium. This is apparent when looking at how films deal with women, especially women as prostitutes. In films of Vietnam, there is virtually no discussion or deconstruction of the discourse. In television, China Beach offers a difference not found in films. For example, McMurphy wheels into the mortuary the body of the dead Vietnamese woman. Not knowing how she died, McMurphy says "No frag wounds, no

grenade flashes, no bullet holes and no ID". To which Beckett replies "Then no casualty of war. She's in the wrong place". Not a casualty of war, she is a casualty of patriarchy.

A woman is represented as being dependent upon her protector. She is so because men have a near monopoly on the means of destruction. On the one hand the man is seen to be the protector and on the other he is seen as the threat. As a prostitute she has less power than a non-combatant and even lesser power because she is Vietnamese. Because of her job she is placed in a position of helplessness. Not only has the male dominance over her safety but also her sexuality. She has sold herself to him therefore she comes to rely on him as her protector. The perception of the protected is dependent upon the rules of patriarchy.

Alluded to in the opening paragraphs was the fact that the parameters of how Vietnam is represented have been set by previous fictional texts and influential roles of Vietnam male veterans. China Beach widens and critiques this even beyond film by going beyond the 'typical' representations of Vietnam and including female vet perspectives. In the politics of representation David Halberstam, a political commentator, believes that "Platoon is the first real Viet Nam film" (Adair, 1989, p. 144). Mike Felker (1990), a Vietnam veteran himself, also insists that Platoon is more real. Gilbert Adair (1989) reasons that this is because of "the primary, ground level stratum of Platoon's realism : the spectator's increasingly intense conviction that he is in some sense there, vicariously sharing the average grunt's own experience" (p. 148). It is mainly due to previous conventions set down by other war movies that Platoon and Tour of Duty are seen to be more real than China Beach because they are texts which conform to a sense of participating vicariously in combat. Realism, therefore represents the spectator's desire that a representation should conform to common sense and taken-for-granted notions of events. It is because of this that Tour of Duty can be seen as a continuum between film and television.

Is Platoon or Tour of Duty more 'real', 'true to life', because it has sergeants and 'grunts' crawling through the mud and tropical jungle with their M16s bursting with fire, than China

Beach, which is situated in a suburban familiar setting with life-guards, the beach, and women? The conventions of the genre that have been set up previously to some extent create how China Beach is perceived.

> What the show ends up evoking isn't Vietnam so much as "Vietnam" - the whole set of pulp connotations and blocked, ambivalent emotions that have garishly come to typify the war in later popular consciousness. It's a recital of obsessive cliches. (Carson, 1988, p. 75)

Although China Beach derives much understanding from previous Vietnam texts and is dependent upon an accumulative process, it still challenges those conventions and is therefore seen as less 'real'.

William Broyles Jnr. (1990), a veteran himself believes that there was a 'real' war but that his

> memories of filmed scenes and real events have become confused. I don't see the real war so clearly now....Vietnam veterans are a little like the cowboys of the old West: there are not very many of us, but we lived a hell of a story. But what story was that? I'm not sure even the vets know anymore. (p. 23)

What becomes apparent in this quote is, firstly, that the conventions or ideals put forth by the heroes of the West have strong influences on how other wars are perceived. Secondly, because of the reliance on other texts what we get are re-representations of Vietnam. The 'truth', if even there is one, is lost in the confusion of images and myths and 'realism' itself seeks to suppress the act of representation in order to propose its version as the truth.

The 'truth' of the films comes mainly from the perspective of male veterans, which China Beach breaks from by adopting women as veterans. The second series of Tour of Duty, influenced by the popularity of China Beach, attempted partial genre 'bending' by incorporating two major women characters (veterans). Though significantly as the series progressed the main females disappeared from the war zone, the psychologist goes back to

the world where she becomes a major, the journalist dies, and the series returns to the conventional all male program.

Tour of Duty is, in its rejection of any feminine traits, fairly uncomplicated whereas China Beach, in its exploration of feminine traits, is more complicated. Having major female characters in a predominantly male genre opens up the relationship between a male world and a female world. As a result a number of areas can be explored: male as casualty, female as casualty and the experimentation of conventions by its very unconventionalities.

A 'feminine' text is said to possibly pose a challenge to dominant forms of relationship between texts and recipients. The danger with labelling texts as being more feminine or masculine once again pertains to the differences and tends to hierarchize one as being more important than the other. Hence programmes such as soap operas which are said to be feminine texts are either ignored or shunted to the back of the list. China Beach, although it contains elements of the soap opera genre, is neither a 'feminine' text nor a 'masculine' text. It is a recombination of both and is therefore a genre bender.

Formally, China Beach is a standard melodrama soap drama combining with war ensemble to become a genre bender. The opening credits of China Beach clearly indicate this genre bending. Firstly, the use of close-ups, typical of the soap genre, immediately suggests a move away from the war genre which concentrates on action packed long shots. Secondly, the frequency of women's appearance suggests that women feature strongly which is not a common trait of the war genre. Thirdly, while men also feature heavily it is not in relation to firepower, although it is evident with background images of helicopters, and tanks bombs. These images of war are conventional to the war genre but are backgrounded in China Beach. It can be gathered from the opening credits that the men, instead of being isolated from women, as in film, are allowed to have relationships not only typically with other men but also with women. For example, Beckett and McMurphy are filmed to suggest a caring friendship and McMurphy is seen with Dodger in a non-sexual intimate shot. Intertwined

with these alternative roles for both men and women are the traditional portrayals of men and their weapons and females in spangled dress entertaining the men.

Another major way in which China Beach is a genre bender is the fact that it portrays relationships between women. In contrast the two western females in Tour of Duty are only seen in relation to men. The journalist and the psychologist are not seen outside their relationships with their respective partners. The two main female characters are never seen to interact with each other or as separate identities from the men. Instead, China Beach sees relationships as being problematic. It, unlike Tour of Duty, has relationships which are multi-layered. There are relationships between male and female and relationships between females which are separate from the men. For example, McMurphy tries to help K.C. kick her heroin habit, Major Garreau although she disapproves strongly of K.C.'s profession is willing to go out of her way to aid her in the search for the man who murdered the Vietnamese whore.

China Beach, as has been pointed out, revises conventional aspects of representations more so than Tour of Duty. None the less, individual programmes within a relatively conventional series can also revise. One of the main characters in Tour of Duty is a female psychologist who, in self-defence, shoots and kills a Vietnamese man. This may or may not be viewed as progressive but it highlights how often women are defended and protected by men and how seldom women resort to violence to defend themselves. Women are usually represented as non-retaliatory and are usually casualties in a society that says men must protect women. This also places restrictions on the male gender because he is then represented as a violent protector.

The framework into which the men and women are placed, in China Beach, depends upon the topic of the week. In the episode of 'Vets' the framework was mostly women veterans recalling their experiences of the Vietnam War. In 'Dodger and Baby', the framework was a man and his desire to protect his baby. 'China Men' depicted the many different interactions

that men have with other men and/or women. Overall, China Beach tends more towards placing McMurphy as the mother, a saintly Joan of Arc figure, but the programme has no problem with changing that image in particular episodes and including a wide range of constrasting roles. Dr Richards is the sardonic, M*A*S*H type character who has woman problems; Boonie is the man who tries to make life more pleasant at China Beach but is also seen as the sex symbol; K.C. is placed as a whore with a heart of gold; Beckett is placed as the Christian traveller between hell and purgatory as he moves from life at China Beach and the Graves Registration Unit; and Lila is placed as the older woman with her impending menopause.

China Beach's Women

To view China Beach in a positive way challenges two critical orthodoxes. The first is the presumed inferiority of film in relation to television. The second is the dismissive feminist/psychoanalytical approach. Cynthia Hanson's article The Women of China Beach (1990), draws upon elements of both psychoanalytical and character-type branches of feminist television criticism. She argues from a feminist perspective that the portrayal of the women of China Beach is highly problematic. Hanson (1990) still sees women as casualties, because, instead of it being a "depiction of women's experiences, *China Beach* might to be two men's [John Sacret Young and William Broyles Jr.] approximation of the female presence in Vietnam" (p. 156). She notes the fact that seven women veterans acted as advisers to the show.

Hanson repeatedly stresses that woman in war loses her sense of self and is rehabilitated by becoming desirable and desired sexually. She concentrates on the objectification of women and the dichotomy virgin/whore which she sees as being the basis of the relationships between the female characters. However, for China Beach this thesis will adopt Pam Cook's (1982) more productive perspective. She believes that her pleasures obtained from Raging Bull

> are traditional and ... want[s] to mobilise some of them in the interests of contributing to feminist debate. Must we always justify our pleasure, our fantasies, as 'progressive', or condemn them as 'reactionary'? [She would] rather see them non-moralistically as fertile ground for discussion of the more painful and difficult aspects of our desires in relation to our politics. (p. 40)

This point of view is far more productive than the feminist judgmental perspective from which Hanson attacks. For example, Hanson begins her attack on *China Beach* with a description of the opening scene from the series' pilot movie. What she includes and what she omits are both significant. She notes the woman lying on the beach clad in poppy-red bathers, the helicopter, the march from the beach, the soldiers wolf whistling, the donning of

her nurse's gown, and the arrival of the broken, twisted bodies of the soldiers. At this point, Hanson ceases her description. Such a point of departure can therefore be used to back up her argument that China Beach objectifies women and places them in traditional roles.

Although the camera does slowly examine McMurphy as she lies on the beach and fetishizes her physical image, which is a conventional technique of filming women, this objectification is contradicted in the succeeding scenes when McMurphy assumes a professional role as a nurse and is seen actively issuing directions to both males and females. She directs dead soldiers to the check-out counter, calls for drugs, and I.V.'s and she is depicted as competent, professional, and above all in charge. The key difference is that although China Beach has a male surgeon, the main focal character is Colleen McMurphy, a woman. Usually it is the male giving orders, taking control of a situation. Failing to highlight the change in the representation of the woman seems to be characteristic of Hanson, which gives rise to a negative overview of China Beach because she basically sees its concept as the product of men.

It can be seen that Hanson does not mention the soundtrack that plays over the top of the pilot's opening scenes in China Beach. The music track over the images is 'Stay Just a Little Bit Longer'. This track can be read on two levels. On the first level it relates to the fact that McMurphy is about to leave Vietnam. Her 'tour of duty' is up and she has seven days left. The song is calling her to stay a little bit longer in Vietnam - which she does, therefore continuing China Beach, the series. On the second level the song is placed over the images of McMurphy as she changes from being a sexual woman in a red bathing suit, to an assertive woman giving orders and directions. It is as though the song is asking women to stay a little bit longer in the role that is traditional to women - that of the sexual subject. The role of McMurphy as sexual subject is rejected, at least for the time being, as she takes on the role of professional.

What some feminist writers, like Hanson, do not seem to acknowledge is that one woman can play or be many different roles. This applies to both male and female. China Beach rejects in many ways the notion that male and female have to stay attached to the familiar conventional roles of prime-time television which give rise to stereotypical characters. This does not ignore the fact that China Beach also adheres to many of the conventions, but China Beach's strength lies in the fact that it does offer alternative representations of both men and women on mainstream television.

Consider the first appearance of the major female characters. This is important in establishing how they will be represented in the future, which is not to say that individual episodes may deviate from this. McMurphy, as we have seen, is introduced as being both feminine and capable, Lila Garreau's first appearance is as an officer addressing the newcomers to China Beach on the subject of codes of behaviour. She is dressed in full uniform, with her hair tied back, and she is positioned in front of the American flag espousing American morals. She lays down the rules of conduct and then sees to it that they are adhered to. K.C. is introduced with a shot of her feet crossed with 'Viet' written on one and 'Nam' written on the other. The camera then slowly travels up her legs, to reveal an ultra-short red mini skirt, and comes to a halt with a mid shot of her smoking a cigarette leaning up against the door frame. Juxtaposed beside Lila's clean image and how she is framed suggests a prostitute. These are the three major female characters that continue throughout the series - the woman/professional, the older, puritan woman, and the whore. It is not so much the easily recognisable characters that are of interest but what the series does with these characters.

Once again it is necessary to take issue with Hanson. She states that the "Voyeuristic viewers of China Beach get the best of both worlds: They can enjoy women as spectacle while participating in their on-screen attempts to escape that position by combating their harassers." (Hanson, 1990, p. 163) Whilst Hanson highlights women as sexual objects it could be argued

that the women's attempts to escape that position are stronger. This is done both in the narrative and in visual terms.

The pilot movie of China Beach supports this interpretation with humorous retaliations by females to male harrassers. In a couple of memorable scenes the normal lines that men use to get the attention of women and thereby satisfy their egos are met by opposition. In one episode Dr Richards is sitting at the bar when three women entertainers arrive to sit at the bar. He gets up, and in a typical Hawkeye move, walks past them and one by one pinches their bottoms. Laurette, one of the singers, gets up and moves after him "Oh Doctor" she calls at which Dr Richard turns around and as she grabs his groin she says "Thank you very much". In another scene a soldier in the aeroplane complains to the air hostess that he cannot put his seat belt on. She replies by "I know that trick", flicks out a switchblade and adds "If I find anything else hanging around down there I'm going to cut it off and take it with me." Hanson points out that the effect of these scenes is to allow the "viewer to participate in the voyeurism as the on-screen voyeurs are chastised." (Hanson, 1990, p. 161)

Hanson adds that this scene serves no purpose to the narrative except to add humour and to establish that women are equipped to deal with male harassment. What is more important, she believes, is the apparent fixation of the camera on the woman's rump throughout the exchange. Contrary to what Hanson believes, what takes precedence over the objectification is that two women are quite capable of countering male attacks. Rather than passive, non-retaliatory action, which is seen as normal representation of women, there is active action. Although the men's harassment is directed at the females in a typically sexual fashion it is turned around. Both retaliatory moves involve the threatening of the male genitals. So although the series to some extent does fetishize women, notably their legs, it also offers alternatives, a matter to which Hanson fails to do justice.

From the outset China Beach offers something new - considering that it is prime-time television - just by the fact that the main characters in such a war genre, are female. The

demands made by Hanson require a more radical text than prime-time genres and formulas usually permit. The process of change on prime time is undoubtedly slow but as even Hanson (1990) acknowledges:

> China Beach received a great deal of advance press, the majority of it favourable. The publicity ... allowed Broyles and Young to articulate their rationale for the series, [and] clearly attempted to establish China Beach as emanating from a female perspective. (p. 156)

Hanson however believes that the images of the photographs in the magazines suggest a different perspective. In both of the examples she uses to defend her argument the women are depicted as nonprofessional, physical, inviting, and protected by men. Ironically for her argument the photograph that illustrates her article depicts McMurphy in fatigues (non sexual), and Major Garreau, in uniform, holding onto McMurphy's arm as though she is hiding from what is outside the frame. This stance makes it look as though McMurphy is protecting her. Behind McMurphy is Dr. Richards similarly dressed in fatigues. They can therefore, from the photograph, be considered as equals. The expression on their faces is one of drama as they look out of the frame. Behind them is the hospital and in front barbed wire - an image of war. This photographic image in no way presents women as sexual objects. It foregrounds McMurphy as protector and central character by her frontal position. Again Hanson is selective in what she decides to use to back up her argument, and in so doing she fails to acknowledge other representations.

It is important to note how men's relationships to a woman on the screen usually revolve around 'the look'; how they look at her and how she looks to them. The seminal paper of Laura Mulvey's (1975) Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema takes "the way film reflects, reveals and even plays on the straight, socially established interpretation of sexual difference which controls images, erotic ways of looking and spectacle," (p. 6) In a way the 'look' of the cinema, she believes, is implicitly male. Hanson comments on China Beach's fetish

for legs, which would suggest condoning the conventional male look - but at other times it rejects it.

In one episode, for instance, an attack on China Beach sends the women into a bunker. The women, who are in different states of dress and therefore different 'attractivenesses' - one with a face pack on, one in a nighty, another in uniform - tell each other stories. The stories come from a female's point of view and the look is not directed to males or for a male's look or a female's look. This is because of detailed emphasis on shared female experiences rather than the attractiveness or fetishization of the female body. It bears more resemblance to a documentary style of filming where the camera happens upon a real life situation. In the ideology of attractiveness the women therefore are not constructed as beauties but are constructed as 'natural'.

In support of Hanson, it cannot be denied that there is a show of beauty and such beauty is ideologically motivated. But even Holly, who is conventionally unattractive because she is fat, is also a part of the beauty pageant, as is the older Lila, which shows that there is at least a wider spectrum of beauty. This is confirmed in individual scenes containing these individuals who are found to be beautiful by different people - Boonie finds Holly attractive, the sergeant is in love with the older Lila, McMurphy has her fair share of men - so although there is a 'winner' of the beauty pageant there is the emphasis on the many possibilities of attractiveness. None the less the fact remains that Lila nor Hollie win the pageant which suggests that beauty is ideologically motivated because the girl who wins the pageant is very beautiful, has a good figure and is very sexually overt. There remains the convention that beautiful girls must win a fat ones can not. There would be disbelief or humour attached if Hollie won or Lila won because they do not fit the mould.

In one key scene which Hanson sees as being the climax in McMurphy's metamorphosis, McMurphy is seen wearing a hitched up silver lamé mini-dress, tights, go go boots, and a push-up bra, in which she entertains the audience (both at home and in the show). The

camera shots alternate between the singers, mainly McMurphy, and the predominantly male audience. Although the women are seen to be 'sexual' entertainers the look that is conveyed via the camera is not one of voyeurism but of audience enjoyment. From McMurphy's point of view we get a look at the men watching the entertainment. The images contain shots of a man trying to clap his hands that are no longer there, a man in a bed with an IV drip attached to him, and many men in bandages. There is no indication of fetishization by the camera, contrary to what Hanson believes. The men are not cat calling, or yowling out sexual comments, they are portrayed as victims of war recuperating and enjoying the show. In a tear jerking moment when the men realize that it is their nurse, McMurphy, out there entertaining them they start clapping and acknowledging their love or respect for her and what she does for them. Instead, Hanson (1990) sees that by "appearing on stage in the costume of a go-go girl and receiving 'a huge dose of unadulterated male lust,' she has restored her ability to cry and disproved the horny pilot's accusation of 'going robot'" (p. 158). Hanson is caught up in looking for the negative side of this scene. McMurphy does not melt because she is given a dose of male lust but because she realizes that she is important to the people around her and to her patients. The abrupt ending to the show by 'incoming' sends her to the medical centre to tend to the wounded. At once she is able to shift competently from her role as entertainer to professional nurse.

In terms of conventional mainstream commercial television texts, China Beach can be discussed on a multitude of levels. It on the one hand can be discussed as a text which fetishizes women but it also offers new spaces. Not surprisingly these spaces are often contradictory. This is made obvious by multiple characters. Each character offers different perspectives and meanings on a similar topic. K.C's reaction to Holly's abortion is different from that of McMurphy's; McMurphy's view of America being in Vietnam is different to Doctor Bernard's; K.C.'s opinion on Dodger taking his Vietnamese baby back to the United States is different from that of McMurphy. As always it is up to the viewers, with their own subjectivities, to decide whose point of view to accept or reject. Nevertheless, the text does

offer 'structures of preference'. This is achieved by how the characters are framed, and/or what is juxtaposed with the scene and/or how it is concluded.

For example, in one episode K.C. perceives America as being run on capitalism not by democracy. Another point of view is, ironically, from Beckett, who believes in another America; one that is more Christian. The viewer is swung between the conflicting views of America. Some texts gloss over contradictions, but at times China Beach deliberately refuses to give an easy conclusion to the conflict. Confusion for the viewer is highly possible, because no one individual is positioned as winner. There is no verbal patching up of their differences. The argument between Beckett and K.C. is not resolved but they are seen playing a game of football together and laughing. The viewers are not given an easy way to make sense, although in terms of structures of preference it is implied through a game of football that it is democracy which makes America turn.

It can be said that contradictions abound in how male and female characters are constrained and liberated by the images constructed mainly in their roles, for example, nurse, prostitute and puritan. Although McMurphy is professionally subordinate to Doctor Richards she is dominant because it is her and not the Doctor who is seen to be giving orders, looking after patients, and coping with critical incidences. This point is taken to extremes in one episode. McMurphy and K.C. are captured by the Vietnamese. They have been taken prisoner because of the nursing skills possessed by McMurphy. Their leader is dying and is in need of immediate surgery McMurphy, the nurse, is forced at gun point to becomes a doctor.

Given the lack of surgical experience, and the primitive conditions with makeshift instruments, McMurphy proves beyond a doubt (even to the extreme which suggests the programme deliberately set out to show that women, no matter what their status, are as capable as men in a given circumstance) that she is a lateral thinker, works competently under pressure, is capable, and skilful. These characteristics are traditionally assigned to male characters and so China Beach challenges assumptions about masculinity and/or

femininity. Although it seems that women have to acquire the same position as men before they are said to be worthy or equal to men, the structures of preference offered by the text suggest that women are seen to be equally capable as men.

The general sense of acceptance that McMurphy has acquired, and the respect that is given to her as a professional is evident when she is called by her last name, a convention that is usually carried out between men to illustrate acceptance and respect. K.C.'s name is a little less definite. In this society prostitutes have virtually no identity, which probably explains the choice of the name K.C.. It keeps the owner's name a secret and suggests a missing identity. The narratives that K.C. are involved in are mainly around her denying her identity and/or trying to find it and/or trying to hide it.

What is represented by the use of McMurphy's last name is the struggle between being professional but also being sexual. In a feminist sense it seems that to be sexual is to be an object to the male voyeur. In another sense to be sexual is the right to step out of the professional role and into another role, which may be that of being sexy. McMurphy meets Doctor Bernard when she is hot, sweaty, and up to her elbows in blood. He is attracted to her then, not when she is 'made up' into a sexual object; in fact his rejection of her begins to occur when she becomes the sex object. At one stage, invited to dinner by Doctor Bernard, she invades K.C.'s wardrobe for a dress. Turning up to his house 'dressed to kill' Doctor Bernard meets her in casual clothing with a Vietnamese boy hanging off his shoulders. The boy whispers in his ear and Dr. Bernard says "He asks, are you cold?" In the structures of preference the text foregrounds McMurphy's unnecessary desire to be a sexual object.

Another of China Beach's liberating structures of preference occurs when the hero/ine's role renders him/her a casualty because they cannot deviate from that given position. China Beach does not restrict itself to seeing McMurphy as a perfect nurse. In China Beach McMurphy is positioned at one level as being archaic in her attitude to Holly wanting to have an abortion. Her attitudes also stem from the time period and her religious background.

Holly receives an infection after losing her baby and is in the process of being examined by Dr Richards when McMurphy bursts into the surgery assuming authority. Holly rejects her yelling that she does not want her there, to get her out. Later McMurphy asks Holly to be her friend but Holly refuses to be. The heroine is rejected both professionally and personally. Rarely is a heroine of prime time television seen to be positioned negatively.

As another major character K.C. offers pleasures which are different as she says: "I sell what sells. I've got a heart of gold." Even though this is said with some sarcasm the following episodes take it literally. The heart of gold statement is then followed through as the episodes unfold - she helps Dodger to get himself and his baby out of Vietnam; a Vietnamese woman who was working for her as a prostitute is murdered so K.C. removes her daughter from the brothel and sends her off to a convent; she helps Cherry to find her brother; she helps Holly abort her baby; she tries to find the murderer of the Vietnamese prostitute.

In China Beach the sexual assault and actual murder of the Vietnamese prostitute initiates K.C. to investigate. K.C. the prostitute becomes the avenging angel not only against the men but against patriarchy. Unlike Casualties of War, in which the guilt is cleansed, China Beach does not so easily place a band aid on woman as victim. Dyer, cited in Fiske (1987), argues that in her role as woman-as-victim "she legitimates male revenge for the threat she poses to masculinity and for the guilt that she inspires" (p. 212). As a woman, and as a prostitute, K.C. does not alleviate the guilt of masculinity. As seen with Casualties of War, Eriksson's revenge is legitimated but does not pose a threat to masculinity. In the end it is left open as to whether Major Otis is the guilty killer or whether he is innocent but just by being a man comforming to patriarchal structures he is implicated in the crime and is therefore guilty.

The Vietnamese woman is a casualty on three accounts: sex, race, and occupation. Although at one level this episode shows woman as victim it also shows woman as being able to confront the so called male protectors. Casualties of War, although about rape does not attack the system. China Beach, in contrast, challenges patriarchy. K.C. states in her attack

of Major Otis, "Why start looking at the truth now?" In other words, why start questioning the system now; why start looking at the reasons that men are both protectors of and threats to women.

China Beach, unlike the films of Vietnam and Tour of Duty, allows the Vietnamese a voice, even if it is brief. In the course of the series there are alternative portrayals of the Vietnamese. They are mainly women who have relationships with the Americans at China Beach. Mai has a relationship with Beckett, Hang works in K.C.'s beauty parlour and befriends Holly through a mutual love of music. They are both seen as caring, intelligent, feeling people. Rather than being viewed as treacherous betrayers, or dumb savages they are allowed to express feelings and beliefs of the war and of relationships. The Vietnamese men, on the other hand, are still portrayed as casualties in that they rarely speak and/or are seen as being violent and treacherous. They do not have feelings, even the South Vietnamese are seen as cruel when they arrest Hang. The alien Americans are seen to be more compassionate towards Hang than her own countrymen.

In a similar way to films, television represents not only the Vietnamese people as casualties but also Vietnam, the country, as a casualty. America, it has been established earlier, is a casualty because of its guilt and apparent innocence. One episode titled 'Independence Day' contains a conversation between McMurphy and Doctor Bernard which highlights the questioning of America's innocence:

"I'm proud to be an American." declares McMurphy.
"Trailing your culture right behind you like some silver motor home."
"What about all the roads we've paved, the irrigation. What about health care?..We're giving the Vietnamese an opportunity to determine their own destiny, a freedom of choice."
"Freedom with guns, napalm and death?"
"No, a chance to make a choice for themselves. Democracy."

During this conversation they are tasting some of America's culinary delights such as twinkies. On one level the audience is positioned by long takes, and minimal editing as the two enjoy tasting America's delights at the same time as hearing conflicting views of why America is in Vietnam. McMurphy is the epitome of the innocent America, as she sits like a little girl, dressed with hair in a band, in casual clothes, mouth around the gooey delights, believing in democracy and its workings. Doctor Bernard represents the more contemporary outlook on Vietnam but he is still seen enjoying the fruits of America. Although America is seen as casualty it remains an innocent casualty as it appears more interested in sugar and delights.

Doctor Bernard's sarcastic statement "In every gook there is an American trying to get out." is illustrated literally in later scenes. Hang, the Vietnamese woman, ends up reading the 'Declaration of Independence' dressed up as George Washington. The irony is that the audience have learnt at an earlier stage that Ho Chi Mieln, the person against whom America is fighting, uses a version of America's 'Declaration of Independence'. America is seen to be fighting against its own philosophies.

Another referral to America's loss of innocence occurs in an episode when K.C. feels that she has to rescue the murdered whore's daughter. K.C.'s actions are based on guilt because she was basically the woman's pimp and did not protect her from harm. K.C. has to buy the daughter from a Vietnamese Madam who is training her to the 'profession'. Taking the money the Madam says "I love Americans - all that guilt.". It is through the guilt of K.C. that the Vietnamese madam wins and America's own guilt is symbolically exposed.

China Beach's 'progressiveness' lies in the fact that it is able to break from the conventions set by films of Vietnam. Its major difference from film is that its perspective is that of both male and female. Because of this China Beach is able to explore territories that film restricts itself from exploring because of its heavy reliance on conventions. China Beach's progressiveness also challenges many of the gender discourses.

two enjoy tasting America's delights at the same time as hearing conflicting views of why America is in Vietnam. McMurphy is the epitome of the innocent America, as she sits like a little girl, dressed with hair in a band, in casual clothes, mouth around the gooey delights, believing in democracy and its workings. Doctor Bernard represents the more contemporary outlook on Vietnam but he is still seen enjoying the fruits of America. Although America is seen as casualty it remains an innocent casualty as it appears more interested in sugar and delights.

Doctor Bernard's sarcastic statement "In every gook there is an American trying to get out." is illustrated literally in later scenes. Hang, the Vietnamese woman, ends up reading the 'Declaration of Independence' dressed up as George Washington. The irony is that the audience have learnt at an earlier stage that Ho Chi Miehn, the person against whom America is fighting, uses a version of America's 'Declaration of Independence'. America is seen to be fighting against its own philosophies.

Another referral to America's loss of innocence occurs in an episode when K.C. feels that she has to rescue the murdered whore's daughter. K.C.'s actions are based on guilt because she was basically the woman's pimp and did not protect her from harm. K.C. has to buy the daughter from a Vietnamese Madam who is training her to the 'profession'. Taking the money the Madam says "I love Americans - all that guilt.". It is through the guilt of K.C. that the Vietnamese madam wins and America's own guilt is symbolically exposed.

China Beach's 'progressiveness' lies in the fact that it is able to break from the conventions set by films of Vietnam. Its major difference from film is that its perspective is that of both male and female. Because of this China Beach is able to explore territories that film restricts itself from exploring because of its heavy reliance on conventions. China Beach's progressiveness also challenges many of the gender discourses.

In China Beach American men appear in a wider spectrum of roles and situations than in all the films put together. In this context, Robert Connell's (1989) ideas on gender roles are fruitful. He refers to 'gender inequality'; not only to men's power over women but to a hierarchy of masculinities through which 'hegemonic masculinity' subordinates other masculinities. In other words, there appears to be a 'hypermasculine' stance which men are continually forced to adopt in their representations. This 'emphasised masculinity', as well as there equall being 'emphasised femininity', is a cultural construction which is promoted in the media and marketed with insistence, for example, in magazines, advertisements, and television texts.

It is this insistence which creates gender casualties. The traditional images of the female emphasise compliance, nurturing, and empathy as virtues, rather than action, or strength. The men's tradtional virtuous images are those of strength, power, control decision making. Central to the maintenance of 'emphasised femininity' and/or 'emphasised masculinity' is a practice that restricts the articulation of other models of femininity or masculinity. Conventionally the war zone restricts the articulation of 'other' types of men because

> war acts to accentuate traditional gender role distinctions, men suffering the stresses of combat are forced to adopt exaggerated "masculine" personality traits to survive. The armed forces mentality is geared to perpetuate those distinctions. (Tal, 1990)

The films, and to some extent Tour of Duty, represent men as being somewhat 'hypermasculine', alhough as noted in the chapter 'The Fragile Hero', there is a tendency in the texts of Vietnam to take the 'hype' out of 'hypermasculinity'. China Beach, due to the inclusion of women allows for challenging representations of men.

Boonie, one of the leading male characters of China Beach, is a depiction of another kind of male. He is the equivalent of a sensitive man character of the soap opera genre. For

Boonie, has relationships so when he begins to woo Holly, who is the antithesis of his looks in that she is fat, it seems incongruous. However, he tells her that of all the women he's had she is the one who makes him feel the most comfortable and he is willing to marry her when she falls pregnant. It is interesting that Holly's reply to this is that although she has a king size crush on him she refuses him on the grounds of them being in Vietnam and if their situation was the same in the 'real world' then it would be different. In the structures of preference it could be construed that because she is fat she could never hope to keep a man like Boonie in the 'real world; or that she is strong enough or takes control of her life; or is she succumbing to the beauty myth that only slim, good looking girls get the good looking men.

Again, China Beach's innovativeness is illustrated in an episode titled 'China Men'. Although the episode is exceptional, even for a genre bending series, China Beach shows how broad China Beach's spectrum can be. What is foregrounded, in this episode, is non-binary gender. A singer comes to entertain the personnel of China Beach. The character is Asian, beautiful, dainty, the perfect stereotype of a woman. Boonie begins to seduce her and takes her back to his 'hootch'. Interrupted by shellfire they dash for cover. What is unusual is that the Vietnamese woman is in actuality a male. The usual conventional pleasure of watching Boonie seduce the beautiful singer is turned on its head when it is realised that he has seduced, or felt attraction for, a transvestite. Such issues are a far cry from normal heterosexual relationships and call into question the conventional notions of what constitutes gender.

This illustration also plays with the belief that men appear to fall in love with, at first glance, the look and the desired image. This, as has already been established, backfires when it is becomes apparent that 'she' is indeed a 'he'. The 'look' or 'image' is not what it first appears to be. Another deconstruction occurs when Boonie brags about his sexual experience with the

machismo. He is a casualty of the myth about men's sexual ability [illegible] to be seen to be able to perform and is in control.

Following the revelation that the Vietnamese woman is a male, Boonie rejects her. Crying to him she offers him flowers. She then reads from a piece of paper in stilted English saying "I am woman, here" and puts her hand on her heart. This is the key speech which foregrounds non-binary gender. She is not 'man' nor is she 'woman'. The traditional oppositions have no place in this incident. She could be speaking for some men who may feel that they are casualties of the male myth because they believe they have what have generally been considered 'feminine' characteristics on the inside and which are an ignored aspect of men.

Contextualized by the title of the episode, 'China Men' is a unique representation of a Vietnamese man and the other males.

Vietnamese men still remain, more so than Vietnamese women, a casualty. The example above is an exception. The Vietnamese women in both films (Rambo II) and television are allowed to have relationships with western men. Even in a 'progressive' text such as China Beach a Western woman cannot have a relationship with a Vietnamese man or vice versa. This area still remains a casualty to both film and television.

China Beach, more so than film, tries to 'de-emphasise' masculinity as casualty in favour of difference. For example, one of the other males of China Beach is Myers, the medic. When Myers is forced to cover his friend Dodger with a gun he cannot fire and runs away. Myers is rejected by Dodger because he does not display the characteristics of 'emphasised masulinity'. To solve their differences they end up fighting one another. Dodger wins but Myers cries out "I am a man, I am a man." In the structures of preference the text resolves their differences when Myers is accepted by Dodger who comes to realise that Myers has skills that are

Television as a whole, focuses heavily on the male subjects' 'boundary rituals' when a youth becomes a man - "self-assured, unafraid, in control, able to take charge, independent, resilient, reliable, autonomous not dependent" (Fiske, 1987, p. 200). Tour of Duty does not necessarily show soldiers experiencing 'feminine emotions', but in an episode where a new recruit joins the patrol he refuses to carry a gun on the grounds of his pacifist beliefs. Because he refuses to carry a weapon, that identifies him as a man, who has, as yet, not been initiated into manhood. This is made obvious when the other men refer to him as "boy", virtually ignore him, and look down on him. It is not until fate intervenes and he is forced to kill that Zeke gives him, with an accepting smile, the symbol of manhood - the weapon. He is thereby inaugurated into the group. He is praised for killing. His reward is the phallic weapon and therefore manhood.

China Beach deals with a similar incident in which its mortician Beckett decides that he wants to be where the action is rather than be 'stuck with' the dead. At the end of the episode instead of being made a man according to the conventions of male dominated genres and given a weapon, Beckett rejects it. Tour of Duty and China Beach, dealing with with similar incidences, offer two contrasting ideological positions. In Tour of Duty the casualties are the men who are forced to remain in a hypermasculine role whilst in China Beach the same type of casualties are exposed in the rejection of action. In Tour of Duty there is a celebration of the climax; in China Beach although there is a climax in Fiske's terms, there is no celebration of it. The rejection comes in different forms. One is in the death of the of main male character, Myers the medic, the sadness that surrounds his death, and in Beckett's verbal and visual rejection of it. Tour of Duty tends to stress the role of performance. In China Beach there is a deliberate rejection of the role of performance and achievement and rarely are weapons the focus.

> not always socially sanctioned however,.... This is hardly surprising, for society is ... in conflict with that closely connected ideology of individualism. So the institutional agencies of society often become the ideological enemy. In M*A*S*H* the real enemy of Hawkeye and his friends is not the North Koreans but the army as a bureaucratic institution. (p. 211)

Likewise, in Tour of Duty the enemy is also seen to be the bureaucrats and their superiors. In order to perform their 'duty' Zeke and Lieutenant go against orders basically because they at times question the army's reasonings. This is a contradiction in terms, because once that hand is raised and the pledge to the army is given there is no more questioning on ideological grounds. The individual is then seen to be able to respond to his 'duty' rather than to his 'programmed' superiors.

In one of the episodes of China Beach, Dodger, who is rarely seen out of combat fatigues, is shown to experience feminine emotions because our culture chooses to label feminine : sensitivity, vulnerability, the overt display of emotions, gentleness, grace and physical beauty divorced from machismo traits (Wood, 1986, p 292). Whilst in Vietnam he forms an emotional attachment to his Vietnamese baby. He is willing to do anything to get the baby out of Vietnam and back into America where both he and the baby can lead safe lives. In his attempt to protect the baby, traditionally the women's role, Dodger displays emotions such as fear when he has to go on a mission before he is able to take the baby away and is vulnerable; confusion when he has to fight bureaucracy and leave his friends for 'the world'; he is shown to have a gentleness in the way he holds and protects the baby; he has an emotional attachment not only to the baby but to McMurphy when he quietly tells her he loves her. Lastly, he is given a sense of grace and physical beauty when he is shot quite lovingly by the camera. This becomes especially noticeable at the end when he and the baby are shot getting off the train(presumably in America). The shot has a slightly diffused look to it and is

In a different and challenging way, Dodger's mission can be likened to the 'last temptation of man'. Dodger is on his way back to China Beach, after having completed his assignment, when he stumbles across a group of soldiers being entertained by a singing troupe. Dodger moves closer towards the stage smiling and watching. One of the girls from the troupe makes eye contact with him. There is obviously some attraction between them, but he pulls away. It is conventional that after a dangerous mission a male's reward is to visit a whore house and/or to get drunk. Dodger, however, resists this temptation. He rejects one form of 'pleasure', which is the female body, and he chooses the baby, to which he has made a commitment.

Another main character of China Beach is Dr Richards. His character is a combination of Hawkeye and Trapper from M*A*S*H*. His humour is both sardonic and ironic. Looking into a ward that looks as though a bomb has hit it with dead bodies of soldiers strewn around, he says "Someone forgot to clean-up the check-out counter". He is not afraid to show that he has been hurt by his wife. Having received an invitation to his ex-wife's wedding he decides to purge himself of the hurt by having his own black wedding. Making dummies of his ex-wife and her husband-to-be he and the citizens of China Beach slowly march down to the beach where they burn them and cast them adrift. He exorcises his pain and has others share it. He does not cope with the pain alone, which is conventional of a hero.

In an episode titled 'Ghosts' two of the main characters, Doctor Richards and Beckett, share their thoughts on their relationships with women. Doctor Richards reminisces about the first time he met his wife. He says, clearly thinking of his experience with his wife, "It's not the first time you sleep with a woman that matters, it's the first time that you wake up with her that matters." This is not the conventional portrayal of a man who is supposed to believe that the act of sex is important above all else. Beckett comes to the realization that he has

made a mistake where Mai is concerned: "I gave everything to men who couldn't ask for anything and when a women I love asked for something I couldn't give it." These admissions are a far cry from the phallic orientated representation of men.

China Beach does not hinge its male representations around the performance of a male as film and Tour of Duty tend to do. Performance of the man is usually accompanied by a show of weaponry. Dodger talks to K.C. about his baby and tells her how he wants to looks after his baby and take him back to America. K.C. says that the best thing for the baby is to protect him from himself. He declares "I am protecting him". "What, with that!" she says pointing to his gun. This conversation points out a tendency in male action and other programmes or films to protect with a gun. China Beach seems to demonstrate an awarenessof the male tendency to protect with a phallic weapon. This scene exposes a self-consciousness that adds to the 'progressiveness' of China Beach. It also exposes an awareness of the limited representations of both male and female as made possible by the interaction of the genders.

Conclusion

Ultimately this thesis endorses and elaborates Bellhouse's claim that representations of Vietnam have "encouraged a new look at western history, to see things never seen or made obvious before" (Bellhouse, 1982, p. 159). The various texts have engaged with a continuous redefining of the place of America in popular consciousness, of the hero and of gender relations. In particular China Beach's explorations of gender difference without opposition, its consistent and inventive self-reflexivity, and its intensified intertextuality offers perspectives best described as postmodern.

As a case study, China Beach can clarify and advance postmodernistic criticism and that criticism can, in turn, highlight China Beach's contemporary relevance. Craig Owens claims that postmodernist writers, such as Frederic Jameson, have ignored the advances of feminism and have failed to put women onto the agenda. China Beach challenges that position and can clarify the implications of these disagreements around postmodernism and gender politics. Owens, for example, argues for the conception of "difference without opposition" instead of relying on binary oppositions which reproduce traditional gender polarities. ((1983, p. 62)

This contests Modernism's belief in the duality or the dichotomy of things which are set up in hierarchical order, rendering one dominant and good, the other submissive and bad. For example, men are represented as dominant, women as submissive. Postmodernism says there is a plurality with many discourses existing at the same time without the hierarchy that modernism attached to these discourses. It is through these binary structures that definitions of society are set up. "The move to rethink margins and borders is clearly a move away from centralisation.... The marginal or the periphery are reasserted as the centre becomes unstable" (Hutcheon, 1988, p. 90). There is the belief that systems such as binary structures are necessary to order experiences.

Vietnam texts have a tendency not to order experiences into binary structures.

Though Adair believes that:

> For cinema's purposes, then, this has become a war that can be waged virtually anywhere and at any time. It has been reduced to a 'style', a set of visual, thematic and ideological parameters, a semi-abstract chequerboard arena in which light contends with dark, white with black, good with evil. (p. 134)

Both eighties film and television texts do not necessarily adhere to the black and white dichotomy set out by Adair. They tend to slip into the penumbra, the grey areas of a shadow. It is not simply a case of good versus evil but even 'making sense' is problematic.

Unlike Tour of Duty, which contains itself far more strictly within the characteristics as described by Adair, China Beach does not contain itself within a rigid structure of dichotomies. It explores many forms, issues, topics, and even delves into magic and the supernatural. Moreover, China Beach is consistently inventive in formal terms which results in a high degree of openess. It is a text which is "full of contradictions, it foregrounds its own nature as discourse and resists coherence or unity. None of its codes is granted priority over others, it refuses a hierarchy of discourses" (Fiske, 1987, p. 94). This will be illustrated in the following three examples.

Firstly, in a unique episode titled 'Vets' 'real life' veterans, mostly females, are interviewed. Incorporated into the interviews are staged productions which closely follow what the interviewees are saying. It foregrounds its own nature by having source material and production, the real and fiction, side by side. 'Vets' explores where the series of China Beach has come from and at the same time what it does with the information. It is full of contradictions which can be exemplified by one nurse's statement: "The best thing about being in Vietnam was all the men and the worst thing about being in Vietnam was all the men."

In an episode formally similar to 'Vets' is 'How to Stay alive in Vietnam, Part I'. The opening to the episode alone is self-reflexive. A voice-over, the colour shots of helicopters bringing in the wounded, then a camera click is heard and the shot turns to black and white and freezes refer to the fact that Vietnam is a war of representation. A man ('Sarge') appears, alone on stage, a bright light blacking out any background reciting his war experiences. Then a woman (McMurphy) takes his place and tells of her experiences of love. Intertwined with their experiences are staged productions. It is different to 'Vets', which was a mixture of real and fiction, as it is a mixture of fiction and fiction. Sarge recites a list of 'How to stay alive in Vietnam'. The words and images contradict and/or elaborate each other.

What is assembled is "a multitude of voices, what Bakhtin calls 'heteroglossia'". These voices cannot be pinned down in a 'hierarchy of discourses'" (cited in Fiske, 1987, p. 96). Although the text does offer structures of preference from which to make sense, both form and content do leave a degree of openess in the text. Both of these illustrations make use of 'interviews' mixed with production which offers new and challenging ways of representing women and men in combat and uses a mixture of fiction and/or realism and/or documentary style.

The third example of self-reflexivity and intertextuality occurs early on in the series China Beach when McMurphy is going through psychological trauma. Her boyfriend is missing in action so she cannot sleep. Overwork and no sleep lessen her grip on reality. This is cleverly illustrated with the use of cartoons. Cartoons of Road Runner and Coyote are used to represent her state of mind, as Coyote, in his attempt to capture Road Runner, plummets over the edge of a huge precipice. This innovativeness, throughout China Beach, shows a high degree of awareness and therefore a self-consciousness rarely found in films or Tour of Duty.

This is summarized by Hebdige's (1988) term 'decadent". It is in this world of China Beach's 'decadences' that the lines between the good and the bad have become blurred. Hebdige (1988) points out that "decadent" is

> "simply what postmodernism is, whether that decadence is presented in postmodernist criticism as a historical phase - associated as in Jameson with an empirically discernible 'cultural condition' produced by the (eternally?) prolonged decline of 'late' capitalism - or whether it is equated with an end of historical developments as in Lyotard (where through the amnesic process we nod off intermittently only to wake up to find ourselves in exactly the same place) or whether this decadence is itself the yearned for end of everything as in Baudrillard". (p 209)

In Jameson's and Baudrillard's terms, the discourse of postmodernism is like Vietnam; fatal. To hover in the morbity and death-like place of Frederic Jameson (1984) and Jean Baudrillard (1980) is to give up searching for new maps of meaning.

Finally, as already mentioned, one of postmodernism's characteristics is intensified intertextuality. Postmodernism to Jameson is the 'cultural dominant' of the nineteen eighties, because he believes that the innovations of modernism have become over-familiar. Intertextuality is more common as the banks of images found in various mediums can be repeatedly used time after time because of the modern ability to store and reproduce. There are also economic reasons as to why there is a 'ransacking of the archives'. As Susan Boyd-Bowman points out, "it is important to remember that image archives were commodified at an escalating rate by the internationalisation and deregulation of the broadcast market in the nineteen eighties" (cited in Kerr, 1987, p. 5). The walls of ownership are narrowing and therefore owners of television not only own television stations but also film archives and/or production and/or distribution houses, such as Rupert Murdoch.

The electronic media has proliferated as never before with a plethora of home recorders and alternatives (cable) saturating the social network of electronic images. Vietnam the War

existed at a time where storage and dissemination of images was immediate. It can quite easily be referred to as a 'postmodern war' in terms of its representations. Vietnam is a simulacrum because the real cannot be reproduced, but is a copy of the original that never existed. The representations of Vietnam are a copy of the real - which is itself a construction and so, therefore, does not exist.

Music, which plays a major part in the Vietnam genre, also ransacks the music archives. Pleasure comes from the knowledge that the world can be remade and there pleasure is also gained through recognition. Using familiar music in different contexts brings new meanings to the scene as was seen with both Full Metal Jacket and China Beach. Music from the old world of yesterday is used to help make sense of the new world of today.

Pastiche is another form of ransacking the past. In China Beach an obvious example is the reference to the famous 1972 photograph of a Vietnamese kneeling in the dirt about to be shot by a fellow Vietnamese. This is drawn from history without a sense of parody. Pastiche, where Jameson is concerned,is negative . The omnipresence of pastiche is to Jameson a 'random cannibalisation of all the styles of the past.' (Jameson, 1984) On the other hand, pastiche can be seen as a clever and meaningful exercise. It can give a situation of new meaning, it can challenge old ways of looking at something and can make obvious things not made obvious before.

Intertextuality and pastiche have effects on historical representations. History is no longer an unviolated, sanctioned place. If history is weakened, as it is if it can be changed and manipulated, then it is no longer a major force used to maintain the dominant ideologies as, for example, historically, a woman's body has been an object of male gaze. (Berger, 1972) This knowledge can be used to great effect by manipulating the conventions and thereby deconstructing the 'male gaze'.

For example, in China Beach, the camera, in a typical male voyeur shot, slowly moves up a woman's body, which is draped in silky, sensual material. Because of the history in the way women are photographed there would be the expectation on the audience's part that at the other end of the sensuous journal the reward will be a beautiful young woman. Instead, the viewers are subjected to an older woman's face which is undergoing a beauty treatment. She has tea bags on her eyes. This deconstructs the woman as casualty in that she is usually portrayed as a beauty object. This is weakened and the dominant ideology is questioned.

This questioning of the dominant ideologies is apparent in this quote by Bellhouse (1982) which states:

> Representations of the innocent America tended to illustrate that they live in a timeless mythical world in which reality is not allowed to intrude very much upon the Walt Disney epic which insist that we are heroes, the defenders of freedom and justice; and the protectors of weak and oppressed. (p. 159)

Vietnam has, to an extent, destroyed this Walt Disney view of America. In the representations of Vietnam the margins and centres of what is questioned are shifting. As Foucault (1988), points out:

> A few years ago, historians were very proud to discover that they could write not only the history of battles, of kings and institutions but also of the economy, now they are all amazed because the shrewdest among them have learned that it was also possible to write the history of feelings, behaviours and the body. Soon they will understand that the history of the west cannot be dissociated from the way its 'truth' is produced and produces its effects. (p. 112)

It is because of this that Foucault (1988) believes that "we are living in a society that, to a great extent, is marching "toward the truth"...". (p. 112) Vietnam's representations of the hero encourages introspection, a questioning not only of the enemy but of ourselves so that a 'truth' may be expressed. From The Green Berets, "Hollywood's Vietnam has proved most interesting and revealing as the unconscious (or semi-conscious) exposure of ... a dislocation

of the self" (Adair, 1989, p. 143). The dislocation of the self, the awareness of good and bad within the self, now a familiar characteristic of Vietnam texts, aids in Foucault's quest for the 'truth'.

Throughout, the thesis has argued that there is another America being reconstructed (Born of the Fourth of July) and/or losing its innocence (Casualties of War); that the hero of Vietnam does not remain a casualty of 'hypermaculinity' but that there are 'other' types of heroes (China Beach, Rambo I, Platoon); that there 'other' representations of the Vietnamese (Full Metal Jacket and China Beach); that there are 'other' ways in which women and men can be represented (China Beach, Rambo II, Tour of Duty, Full Metal Jacket). It is this awareness of the 'other' representations that challenges existing traditional casualties. The films and Tour of Duty tend to illustrate aspects of this, whereas China Beach's self-consciousness enables it to explore the 'casualties of war' further.

of the self" (Adair, 1989, p. 143). The dislocation of the self, the awareness of good and bad within the self, now a familiar characteristic of Vietnam texts, aids in Foucault's quest for the 'truth'.

Throughout, the thesis has argued that there is another America being reconstructed (Born of the Fourth of July) and/or losing its innocence (Casualties of War); that the hero of Vietnam does not remain a casualty of 'hypermaculinity' but that there are 'other' types of heroes (China Beach, Rambo I, Platoon); that there 'other' representations of the Vietnamese (Full Metal Jacket and China Beach); that there are 'other' ways in which women and men can be represented (China Beach, Rambo II, Tour of Duty, Full Metal Jacket). It is this awareness of the 'other' representations that challenges existing traditional casualties. The films and Tour of Duty tend to illustrate aspects of this, whereas China Beach's self-consciousness enables it to explore the 'casualties of war' further.

References

Adair, G. (1989). Hollywood's Vietnam: From the Green Berets to Full Metal Jacket. London: Heinemann.

Baudrillard, J. (1980). The Implosion of Meaning in the Media. In K. Woodward (Ed.), Myth of Information: Technology and Post- Industrial Culture (pp.137-148). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Bellhouse, M.L. & Litchfield, L. (1982). Vietnam and Loss of Innocence: An Analysis of the Political Implications of The Popular Literature of the Vietnam War. Journal of Popular Culture, 16(3), 157-173.

Berger, J. (1972). Ways of Seeing. London: British Broadcasting Corporation.

Bolton, T. (1989/90, Winter). Advertising Democracy. Ten 8, 35, 21-35.

Britton, A. (n.d.). American Cinema of the 70's. Sideshows: Hollywood in Vietnam. Movie, 27/28, 2-23.

Broyles, W. (1990, September, 22-23). Box-Office Vietnam: How the War became the Movie. The Australian Magazine, pp. 21-31.

Carson, T. (1988). Sixtiessomething. Film Comment, 24(4), 75-77.

Connell, R.W. (1989). Gender and Power: Society, the Person and Sexual Politics. Australia: Allen & Unwin.

Cook, P. (1982). Masculinity in Crisis?. Screen, 23(3/4), 39-46.

Delillo, D. (1986). White Noise. London: Picador.

Ellis, J. (1982). Visible Fictions. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Felker, M. (1990). Platoon, Full Metal Jacket: Back to Vietnam. Jump Cut: A Review of Contemporary Media, 33, 28-30.

Fiske, J. (1987). Television Culture. London: Methuen.

Foucault, M. (1988). Power and Sex. In L. Kritzman (Ed.). Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings 1977-1984 (pp. 110-124). London: Routledge.

Hanson, C. (1990). The Women of 'China Beach'. Journal of Popular Film & Television, 17 (4),157-163.

Hebdige, D. (1985). The Bottom Line on Planet One. Ten 8, 19, 40-49.

Hebdige, D. (1988). Hiding in the Light. London: Routledge.

Hutcheon, L. (1988). Decentering the Postmodern: the Ex-centric. A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction. London: Routledge.

Jameson, F. (1984). Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism. New Left Review, 146, 53-92.

Kerr, P. & Hayward, P. (1987). Introduction. Screen, 28(2), 2-8.

Kuhn, A. (1982). Women's Pictures: Feminism and Cinema. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Marshall, K. (1987). In the Combat Zone: An Oral History of American Women in Vietnam, 1966 - 1975. United States of America: Little Brown Company.

Mulvey, L. (1975, Autumn). Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema. Screen, 16(3), 6-18.

O'Sullivan, T.,Hartley, J., Saunders, D. & Fiske, J. (1983). Key Concepts in Communication. London: Methuen.

Owens, C. (1983). The Discourse of Others: Feminists and Postmodernism. In H. Foster (Ed.). The Anti-Aesthetic, Essays on Postmodern Culture. United States of America: Bay Press.

Smith, G. (1989 July/August). Body Count. Film Comment, 25(4), 49-52.

Stiehm, J. H. (1982). The Protected, The Protector, The Defender. Women's Studies International Forum, 5(3/4), 367-376.

Tal. K. (1990, Spring). The Mind at War: Images of Women in Vietnam Novels by Combat Veterans. Contemporary Literature, 31(1), 76-96.

Wheelwright, T. & Buckley. K. (1987). Communications and the Media in Australia. Australia: Allen & Unwin.

Wood, R. (1986). Hollywood from Vietnam to Reagan. United States of America: Columbia University Press.

Filmography

"Born on the Fourth of July". (1989). United States of America. (Motion Picture).

"Casualty of War". (1990). United States of America. (Motion Picture).

"China Beach". (1989/90). United States of America. (Television Series).

"Full Metal Jacket". (1987). United States of America. (Motion Picture).

"Platoon". (1986). United States of America. (Motion Picture).

"Rambo - First Blood I". (1982). United States of America. (Motion Picture).

"Rambo - First Blood II". (1985). United States of America. (Motion Picture).

"Tour of Duty". (1989/90). United States of America. (Television Series).